existing bio-fertilizer production unit in 1997-98. While considering the proposal, it was found that the existing unit had received grants of Rs. 21 lakh from North-East Council for its establishment. The State Government was requested to inform about the utilisation of these grants in the 7th plan and the capacity established from this grant. The requisite information has not been submitted consequent to which the subsequent proposal has not been processed.

Transportation charges to retailers of levy sugar

3664. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are allowing transportation charges to retailers of State for procuring levy sugar for central pool; and

(b) if so, at what rate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) and (b) Government allows transportation charges to the retailers of PDS Sugar at rates prescribed in the guidelines for distribution of levy sugar in the Public Distribution System. As per present guidelines for fixing margins for wholesalers/retailers effective from 1.4.1996, transportation charges for retailers of each State is fixed on the basis of audited figures of expenditure, duly approved by the State Government concerned, incurred for previous years.

Rice specifications

3665. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:
SHRI LAJPAT RAI:
SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria laid down for fixation of rice specifications every year for acceptance of rice in central pool;

(b) whether Punjab Government has suggested relaxation in fixation of rice specification for kharif 1999-2000 marketing season; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?